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# In wake of Roe reversal, Planned Parenthood seeking to expand in New Mexico

5-6 minutes



LAS CRUCES - Following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision last week to end the constitutional protection for abortion established nearly 50 years ago in *Roe v. Wade*, the expansion of abortion clinic infrastructure in New Mexico appears underway to meet an expected increase in demand for services, likely including many

patients from states where abortion is restricted.

Though New Mexico allows abortions throughout pregnancy, abortion clinics are located in only three of New Mexico's 33 counties, and those services are mostly medication abortion care. Procedural abortion, which is recommended later in a pregnancy and requires a medical procedure, is far more limited. It can be accessed only in Albuquerque.

Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains — which has clinics providing abortion services in Santa Fe and Albuquerque — has said publicly the organization is working to expand south in the state but has not shared an anticipated timeline.

**More:** [How many abortion clinics are in New Mexico? Fewer than you might think.](#)

According to public information, the organization applied for a nonprofit business license from the City of Las Cruces which was approved March 3 of this year. Application details advise that the organization will be operating in a suite along South Telshor Boulevard. Planned Parenthood has not confirmed the location.

## Pink House West

According to the *Mississippi Clarion Ledger*, Jackson Women's Health Organization — also known as the Pink House — [will be opening a new location in Las Cruces some time this summer](#). The Mississippi organization was the respondent in the recent U.S. Supreme Court opinion which overturned *Roe v. Wade* June 24.

Representatives of the Pink House have announced that they are working on opening Pink House West in Las Cruces, however the *Sun-News* has been unable to reach the organization for further

comment.

“There will be Pink Houses all over the country if I have anything to say about it,” Diane Derzis, CEO of the Pink House, said at a June 24 news conference.

## Planned Parenthood plans

Earlier this week, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham [said she would encourage abortion providers to expand in New Mexico](#) and consider possible financial incentives.

Adrienne Mansanares, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, said the scarcity of abortion clinics in New Mexico is reflective of a broader lack of sufficient healthcare service providers statewide and isn't unique to abortion.

“Abortion care is one of those things that happens to be the most politically charged topic,” Mansanares said. “But in general, we have a lack of the full spectrum of healthcare in the state.”

**More:** [New Mexico governor orders safeguards for abortion access](#)

Even as PPRM has tried to expand its reach by building a facility in southern New Mexico, Mansanares said her organization has bumped up against calls by local stakeholders and community members for more comprehensive healthcare services, not just limited to abortion.

Mansanares said “there couldn't have been a worse time for (the SCOTUS) ruling to come,” since high fuel and construction costs make it more expensive to build new clinics.

## Telehealth services

But Mansanares said Planned Parenthood has still made some moves to expand services. It has invested in telehealth services to provide access for residents who live in states where abortion is legal but may not have a clinic nearby.

That is likely important in New Mexico, where 91 percent of counties had “no clinics that provided abortions” in 2017, and where 48 percent of women live in counties without clinics — both percentages higher than their national counterparts — according to the pro-abortion rights Guttmacher Institute.

“(Telehealth is) wonderful because it allows patients to be able to access that care quickly on a timeframe that works for them,” Mansanares said. “It can be more affordable that way. There's more privacy for them that way.”

Mansanares said telehealth also provides easier access to abortion care for Texas residents, who could drive across the border into New Mexico and take a phone call to receive care without needing to physically travel to the nearest clinic. Almost all abortions after six weeks are banned in Texas.

Planned Parenthood’s telehealth services include mailing medication for abortion, though Mansanares said a patient from Texas, for instance, would still need to have the pills sent to an address in New Mexico.

Along with telehealth, Mansanares said PPRM plans to expand an Albuquerque facility using \$3 million it raised in 2018 — though Mansanares said more money is likely needed. Additionally, she said PPRM has reinvested into its workforce with more competitive pay to boost retention as the demand for abortion services and advocacy is expected to grow.

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